



# KARO ECHO Newsletter

## KARO ECHO

Serving the communities  
of El Cerrito and  
Kensington, California

**Web:** [www.karoecho.net](http://www.karoecho.net)

**Facebook:**

[KARO ECHO facebook](#)

**Email:** [info@karoecho.net](mailto:info@karoecho.net)

## Important Frequencies

KE Primary: 146.415 MHz  
Weekly Net, Thurs. 1900

KE Secondary: 146.475 MHz

4Cs Repeater: 145.110 MHz  
(TX down 600 with PL 82.5)

## Monthly Meetings

In-person meetings

2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month  
7:00 pm

Arlington Park Clubhouse,  
**(new location)**  
1120 Arlington Blvd,  
El Cerrito, CA

The next meetings are:

April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019

May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Meeting minutes are on  
the website in the past  
events page. Thank you to  
Natalie KM6UCF.

## What's New

### KARO ECHO Meeting April 8, *New Time and Location*, 1900 in El Cerrito

Reminder that the KARO ECHO meeting time has been moved up to 1900 from the previous time of 1930. The location is now at the Arlington Park Clubhouse. The meeting will be held on April 8 at Arlington Park Clubhouse, (new location) 1120 Arlington Blvd, El Cerrito, CA.

The upcoming Club Meeting on April 8 will include a presentation on net control operation by Howdy, KE6BEE. Also David, KJ6AAT will present on reconditioning used batteries. If time permits Don will show the KaroEcho Go-Kart.

### KARO ECHO Facebook

The [KARO ECHO Group on Facebook](#) has a lot of good information, more than is contained on our website. There is a whole wide world of emergency communications information at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1451216838315743/>. Check it out and be inspired of what we can do to help disaster victims in our community.

### Weekly Training Net

The Karo-Echo Weekly Training Net meets every Thursday evening immediately after the West Co Co County RACES/ACS Net; but not before 1900 on 146.415 MHz Simplex. Details at <https://www.karoecho.net/events>

### KARH-ECHO Frequencies

The KARO ECHO primary frequency is still 146.415 MHz simplex. **Our secondary frequency however has been changed to 146.475 MHz simplex** thus creating a 60 KHz spread between operating frequencies that will reduced adjacent frequency desensing.

### Recruiting Existing Hams

Edward, KM6UBY, has created spreadsheets of all the hams in El Cerrito and Kensington that can be used for a targeted mailing about KARO ECHO activities. The El Cerrito Fire Department may cover the postage for a mailing, thanks to Chief Gibson and Chief Janes. The mailing will be used for to recruit existing hams who may have abandoned KARO ECHO due to its past disorganization. All that is necessary now is to compose the letter to accompany the envelopes.

**LOCAL NETS****KARO ECHO NET**

146.415 MHz Simplex

Thursday eve, immediately after the West Contra Costa RACES Net, but never before 1900 hours local time.

**West Contra County ACS/RACES Net**

145.110 MHz repeater

(TX down 600 with PL 82.5)

Thursday: 1845 local time

**Contra Costa County HF EmComm/RACES Net**

3893 KHz

Thursday: 1835 local time

**American Red Cross of the Bay Area (ARCBA)**

WW6BAY Repeater

443.975 MHz

TX =5 MHz, PL 100 Hz

Wednesday: 2000 local time

**BOARD OFFICERS**

President: Hal KK6NDF

Treasurer: Larry KK6GIO

Secretary: Natalie KM6UCF

Vice President Pro Tem:

Don NI6A

Emergency Coordinator:

Jamuel JM6HBO

Exec Board Member at Large:

Howdy KE6BEE

Webmaestro: Rob K6RJM

**What's New *(continued)*****KARO ECHO 501(c)3 Status**

**Thanks to Larry, KK6GIO,** KARO ECHO is now a 501(C)3 tax deductible organization. We can now obtain various benefits including receiving grants for portable go-boxes, antennas, batteries, classes, ham crams, etc. We solicit members to reach out to those with grant writing expertise.

**The KCC Seismic Upgrade**

The Kenwood VHF/UHF radio, deep cycle battery, and X-300A dual-band antenna installed at the Kensington Community Center is being removed because of a major seismic upgrade at the KCC. Jerry, K6KOP, will be in charge of storing the equipment at the ham radio station located at Kensington Fire Station 65.

**KARO ECHO Dues are Due !**

**Action Item: Please send in your dues** to KARO ECHO -- P.O. Box 2025 -- El Cerrito, CA. 94530-3651 or see Larry at this Monday's meeting at the Arlington Park clubhouse. You can still be a non-voting member of KARO ECHO without paying dues, but only licensed Amateur Radio Operators and dues paying members will be allowed to vote. So if you can't afford \$30 for full membership (or \$40) for family membership), please come and participate in any case. Your suggestions are important to disaster comms in our cities. We are still in the hole for expenses already expended for our incorporation, our post office box, web page, and station operating manuals.

**Equipment Fixed**

All three high end 50 watt Kenwood TM-741A dual-band radios are operational, after two were repaired by KE6BEE. New buttons were 3D printed for the radio that had lost some and new button retention o-rings were installed in both radios to prevent future losses. One of the radios had a bad solder joint on a diode that was preventing it from powering up. Both radios were fitted with white LEDs to replace the small incandescent backlight bulbs. This makes the display bright, crisp and more reliable. Howdy and Jamuel, KM6HBO, are continuing to work on repairing the Diamond X-500 HNA antenna that had been installed at the El Cerrito Senior Center before they were forced to move. New capacitors will be installed and it might need a new coax connector.

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## Activities

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### Weekly Net Control Rotation

Thanks go out to the 8 volunteer stations listed below who have been taking turns at NCS over the past few months. This rotation has been working very well and everyone has been doing a great job. There are opportunities to fill in when a regular station has a scheduling conflict and there is always room to add more stations to the rotation. The NCS isn't expected to lead an exercise each week, but is welcome to. The exercise/training group will continue to provide this content following the check-ins, as possible. Please [download the new Net Script for NCS operators](#). The protocol for voicing "emergency" traffic has changed.

**Action Item: Help create a deep pool of skilled NC operators.** Please contact Howdy [ke6bee@arrl.net](mailto:ke6bee@arrl.net) if you are interested in taking a net control assignment.

<b>KE6BEE</b>	Howdy Goudey	<b>K6RJM</b>	Rob McNicholas
<b>KK6NDF</b>	Hal Graboske	<b>KE6HCE</b>	Armando Picciotto
<b>KM6HBO</b>	Jamuel Starkey	<b>NI6A</b>	Don Simon
<b>KK6GIO</b>	Larry Vanselow	<b>KK6SRD</b>	Ken Gustafson

Over the past year of keeping track of our Thursday net check-ins, there have been 55 unique call signs and an average of 14 check-ins per week. The largest number of check-ins was 20 on 3/21/2019. Thanks to everyone who participates so reliably. Don NI6A had the most 2018 check-ins with 39, but there were 17 more stations with 20 or more (KJ6AAT, KE6BEE, KJ6BHX, KM6CXI, KJ6DJ, KK6GIO, KM6HBO, KE6HCE, K6KOP, KK6NDF, KC6OBK, KC2OKI, KK6RED, K6RJM, KK6SRD, KJ6WSS, KK6ZPM). Armando KE6HCE leads the pack for 2019 with 13 check-ins so far.

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## About KARO ECHO

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KARO ECHO is the name of the Kensington Amateur Radio Operators and the El Cerrito Ham Operators mutual benefit association, an all-volunteer non-profit group of amateur radio operators providing auxiliary communications for the cities of Kensington and El Cerrito in the event of a disaster. KARO ECHO works with CERT (Community Emergency Response Teams) in Kensington and El Cerrito, but is not an official part of the CERT program.

Monthly in-person meetings of KARO ECHO are on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 pm at the Arlington Park Clubhouse, 1120 Arlington Blvd, El Cerrito, CA. The next meetings are:

- ◆ April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019
- ◆ May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Yearly dues are \$30/year for individuals, \$40/year for a family membership. Mail to:

KARO ECHO, PO Box 2025, 6324 Fairmont Ave, El Cerrito, CA 94530-3651

Please see our website for more information: [www.karoecho.net](http://www.karoecho.net)

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## Outreach, Education and Licensing

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### Ham Classes

KaroEcho Technician Class and FCC licensing exam began at 1830 on April 3 at the Arlington Park Club-house. This is a joint effort by KaroEcho and the East Bay Amateur Radio club. More at [ko6no.com](http://ko6no.com)

### Benecia Amateur Radio Club Ham Cram

Also in early May the Benecia Amateur Radio Club is giving its highly successful ham cram. Details of this and more ham classes at <https://www.karoecho.net/events>

### KARO ECHO Ham Cram

The KaroEcho Ham Cram is still in the works for the Summer; but it will require more volunteers. So far Jamuel KM6HBO, Andy AI6PW, David KJ6AAT, and Don NI6A have volunteered to help as Volunteer Examiners. Others have come forward.

We need to spread this and other efforts out to more concerned members to avoid burning out our small and dedicated core members. Please ask how you can help.

### SET Video on YouTube

**We are also producing a video documenting the Feb 23 SET** using assorted voice recordings, videos, photos, and narration. Thanks to Howdy, Robin, and Andy. This work is being coordinated by Don; but somewhat delayed. If you have any video editing or production skills please contact [ni6a@arrl.net](mailto:ni6a@arrl.net) We need your help -- don't be shy.

### SET Article in Kensington Outlook

Larry also arranged the publication in the April "Kensington Outlook" detailing our February SET; which was accompanied by two photos and an excellent article.

### ELMERING

Don is available for **Elmering/Mentoring**. Email [ni6a@arrl.net](mailto:ni6a@arrl.net)

In the meanwhile, please check out the plethora of disaster radio communications topics at <https://www.karoecho.net> website and/or request specific literature to be created.

### CERT SET YouTube Video

See the CERT SET Youtube video link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66DdgGLIn4c&list=PLROOaUIKdrEgSID1bQJZojW3PzfURoEY-&index=144&t=0s>

### Communications Handout to the CERT Graduates

Howdy KE6BEE and Robin have been working on a 1 page handout for CERT trainees regarding disaster communications; i.e., how will the blocks communicate with CERT area command posts between CERT area command posts, and the EOC. There is still more work needed on refining the organizational structure of the CERT program as it relates to interfacing with radio communications in a disaster. There is an ongoing dialog in this regard; but it is hoped that we will be able to hand out a FRS/GMRS primer at the El Cerrito/Kensington CERT trainings. This is the current draft that we started from [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QuU1EkkXipGgu9lNUur\\_xli38Tv8zRvGimgJ1p0B8g/](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QuU1EkkXipGgu9lNUur_xli38Tv8zRvGimgJ1p0B8g/)

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## KAROECHO.Net Website

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Especially, check out the EVENTS Page ( <https://www.karoecho.net/events> ) and the WORKSTREAMS drop-down menu which will lead one to an extensive training page that provides online learning at your own pace. Everything from the very beginning to advanced EmComm operations is detailed. The RESOURCE page has many excellent outside links.

- ♦ If you are on Facebook, contribute to the KARO ECHO Facebook Group Page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1451216838315743/>
- ♦ If you haven't already filled out the **JOIN** form please do. Find it as a drop down menu under "Get Involved" See <https://www.karoecho.net/join>
- ♦ A follow-through novice primer has been put on the website for new hams once they have bought their radio and want to learn more. See: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/10J-569BRrx5adhA-hJGPeNITU6B9Yi6z/view>
- ♦ Also a new Dual-Band antenna primer for new hams who want to graduate from the rubber-ducky world is at [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1u\\_ozABBYDJDACFJRTV\\_rxWF1WjCgW\\_I/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1u_ozABBYDJDACFJRTV_rxWF1WjCgW_I/view)
- ♦ Note that the Tram 1480 gain dual band antenna is currently still available for \$51 (no tax and free shipping) on ebay or from Home Depot. That and an inexpensive speaker tripod is a dynamite combination for portable operation. This antenna is equivalent to the Diamond X-200a antenna which sells at HRO for \$125.00 before taxes and shipping.
- ♦ For newbies, please visit <https://www.karoecho.net/workstreams/training> and read the study materials. It is all there except for hands-on experience. Ask questions!  
**On every Thursday evening net** there will be a training session and/or discussion. Summaries of recent net events are found under our past events page at <https://www.karoecho.net/events/past-events>
- ♦ Note: See the **KARO ECHO Agenda** for our upcoming Monday, April 8, 2019 Meeting see: <https://www.karoecho.net/events> the agenda will be made available no later than the Sunday immediately preceding the meeting.
- ♦ All recent KARO ECHO **Minutes** will be found at our **Past Events** page <https://www.karoecho.net/events/past-events.Past>. We are now including past Executive Board Minutes as well. Newsletters are on the Documents Page.

If you desire to be removed from this email list, please email Don, [ni6a@arrrl.net](mailto:ni6a@arrrl.net)

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## Emergency Planning

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### A Rethinking of Our Relationship With CERT

We are hoping that the CERT program will be open to enhancing our procedural interface with the CERT Area Coordinators and the Area Command Posts as well as integrating communications in their training program. At this point, given an earthquake, we are told that we cannot enter the buildings of our installed equipment at Harding Clubhouse (EC5), Tassajara Park (EC9), or the Kensington Community Center until the buildings are inspected and approved for occupancy. Obviously that would be too late for disaster communications. Therefore if access is not granted or indefinitely delayed during a disaster, the equipment will be deemed useless. An alternative is to receive permission from the City to terminate the antennas in weather proof and lockable outdoor patch boxes for immediate hook up to portable battery powered VHF and UHF equipment.

If the City does grant permission for outdoor weatherproof patch boxes, then the third option is to put the equipment in portable go-karts equipped with uhf/vhf equipment, coax, portable tripods, gain antennas, suitable battery to sustain a 50 watt Kenwood radio operating at 50% duty cycle, operating manual, forms, the KE Field Operations Manual, simplex frequency list, etc (as per K6RJM's template). Don NI6A believes that this is the most flexible alternative at this point.

CERT, our primary stakeholder and client in El Cerrito and Kensington is being reorganized and our role is being reevaluated.

As a result the FRS/GMRS radio class for CERT graduates has been postponed until we receive clarification regarding CERT's communications plan. We do hope that we can present something about radio disaster communications at a regular CERT training session for CERT trainees as well as a longer and more thorough presentation using FRS/GMRS radios at a block level, light search and rescue, damage assessment, and communications to the CERT area Command Posts; which would be designed to have an in-place GMRS radio antenna co-located with ham antenna (both with externally accessible patch boxes), so that inter-area mutual aid, as well as EOC communications, could be accomplished from many locations.